



Welcome to the March 2010 enews of IAOPA Europe, which goes out to 23,000 aircraft owners and pilots in 27 countries across the continent

8.33 kHz radio spacing is coming

The European Commission has decided to mandate the use of 8.33 kHz radio spacing at all levels across Europe, and is requiring that new aircraft be equipped with this spacing from 2012. Retro-fitting of old aircraft with new radios will begin within eight years, although there is no indication of when the retrofit will have to be completed by. In the interim, radio frequencies will be allocated in such a way that Class D and C airspace will be accessible to aircraft with 25 kHz radios.

IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson, who has been in negotiation with various bodies about 8.33 kHz radios for almost 20 years, says: "We have managed to stave off this requirement for a decade, which is something general aviation can take comfort from, but we always knew that ultimately it would be forced upon us. States will have up to 2018 to decide how to apply the retrofit requirement, and it is to be hoped that less expensive 8.33 equipment will become available in that time."

IAOPA has never accepted that 8.33 is necessary below FL195 - it has been mandated above that level since 2007 - because all the frequencies aviation needs could be created through efficiencies by combining all of Europe's frequency allocation offices. NATO has done this, and has found all the frequencies it needs. However, the decisions are being made by those who run the frequency allocation offices.

During a Eurocontrol consultation, most stakeholders agreed that the 8.33 mandate should be taken down to the ground - it didn't affect the airlines because they're all 8.33 already, and have passed the cost to passengers. But the stakeholders stipulated that Eurocontrol: "Develop a European Implementation Plan with the participation of all affected stakeholders, also taking into account the issue of funding." Exactly how that 'issue of funding' is to be taken into account is unclear. Martin Robinson says: "They're not going to pay for your new radio, but it may be that they cover some certification costs."

New tax grab creates aviation danger in UK

8.33 also figures in a battle AOPA UK is fighting to prevent the government from taxing aviation radio frequencies. This new tax will increase the risk of flying as the dwindling number of small aerodromes find ways of avoiding the new charges. The British telecommunications office Ofcom is deaf to reason and is pushing ahead with the new tax, spurred on by a government that is desperate for money. Given that most European governments are equally hard up, it seems likely that if the British succeed in imposing the new radio tax, others will follow.

Ofcom is demanding £2,600 (€3,000) a year for an aerodrome air-ground service, £9,900 (€11,300) for ATIS and VOLMET and up to £19,800 (€22,500) for VHF digital links. The tax will be paid by the service provider and billed to pilots in the form of increased landing fees. But many small airfields, already struggling as high costs drive traffic away, will avoid the tax by giving up radio altogether. Ofcom realises that this will impact on safety, but says that's not their problem - the Civil Aviation Authority will have to sort it out, they say.

Ofcom claims that by making .25 MHz radio more expensive than 8.33 kHz radio it will encourage the use of 8.33 and relieve radio congestion has been shown to be rubbish by AOPA, using algorithms created by AOPA Germany to prove that frequency congestion is solely the result of mismanagement. The new EC mandate for 8.33 strips away the last pretence that this is anything other than a cash-raising exercise. Martin Robinson says: "They've found something new they can tax and they're not going to be denied. The congestion argument is just a fig-leaf to cover their money-grab."

Ofcom's original proposals caused a public outcry because it planned to tax the emergency services for distress frequencies, but these plans have been dropped. AOPA says aerodromes with multiple frequencies will be forced to amalgamate them, increasing radio congestion, and other airfields will go non-radio, reducing safety margins.



Aero Friedrichshafen beats the recession

Aero Friedrichshafen, which runs from April 8th to 11th, is defying the economic gloom with more than 450 exhibitors from 25 countries having booked space in nine halls. Outdoor exhibit space is fully booked, and more than 50% of the exhibitors come from outside Germany. Aero has grown exponentially since it was first held, and from this year it will be an annual, rather than a bi-annual, event.

IAOPA will have a major presence at Aero and is included among the event sponsors, and the AOPAs of Germany and Switzerland have joined together to take substantial exhibition space. The IAOPA-Europe quarterly Regional Meeting will be held in conjunction with Aero, and IAOPA President Craig Fuller will be attending and addressing a conference. Aero showcases every facet of GA from hang gliders to business jets. Project director Thomas Grunewald says this year's strong showing is due to the fact that in a recession it is even more important for manufacturers to market their products aggressively. 'For many of our customers, Aero is a persuasive reason not to take cover and react to these challenging economic times in an anti-cyclical manner,' he says.

Aero is held at Friedrichshafen airport, with a free shuttle bus running between the terminal and the show. AOPA members will receive a significant admission fee discount. For information, see www.aero-expo.com/aero-en/visitors/news.php.

Support AOPA Sweden on Barkarby

The last hard-surface GA aerodrome in Stockholm, Barkarby, is closing to general aviation, and AOPA Sweden now seeks your help in its long-running campaign to keep it open. GA at Barkarby (ESKB) has been under pressure for a decade, but politicians have been slow to respond to AOPA's lobbying and only in the last two years have they shown an interest. It may be too late. Since January ESKB has been operating on a PPR basis, restrictively applied, and resident aircraft will have to be moved within the next few months. Bromma (ESSB) the remaining City airport in the

Stockholm area, is mostly closed at weekends and charges high rates for GA landing, parking and handling. The nearest open airport with a hard runway is more than 60 kilometres from the city centre.

The loss of a hard-surface airfield in the Stockholm area is a serious blow to all European pilots, making a large part of Sweden inaccessible to general aviation. AOPA Sweden Vice President Lennart Persson is asking AOPA members to add their voices to help strengthen the case for Barkarby. The questions he poses are:

- Would you visit Stockholm as a GA pilot considering these circumstances?
- Would the lack of a GA airport negatively influence a decision on investing in a business in Stockholm?
- Stockholm has two million people and is at the fringes of the EU. Do you think a welcoming GA airport is an asset for Stockholm?

AOPA's team on this issue is Torgny Bramberg and Mats Skroder. Please email your view and comments to them via eskb@aopa.se

Fürsti needs you, too

BMW is mounting a damage-limitation campaign after receiving hundreds of letters and emails from pilots condemning the car company's role in an attempt to close the Munich general aviation airport Fürstfeldbruck, which BMW wants for a car driving range.

Pilots who threatened to stop buying BMWs for company car fleets and private use have received letters and phone calls from BMW saying the airfield has already closed and blaming Bavarian politicians, but AOPA Germany's Managing Director Dr Michael Erb says this is not true. "Fürstfeldbruck is still operating, and BMW has enormous influence in Bavaria," he said. "They are clearly worried, and we need to keep the pressure on."

The fight to save 'Fürsti' should involve all European pilots because following the closure of the former Munich Riem International Airport and the nearby Neubiberg Airport, Fürsti is the only remaining landing facility for GA in the Munich area able to cope with all categories of GA aircraft. Its closure would be a strategic loss for all of general aviation. AOPA Germany says there is no reason why BMW driver training and the airfield can not coexist on the 260-hectare (642 acre) site.

Military flying ceased in 1997, and AOPA Germany took a 25% stake in the company which operates the site as a GA airfield. The company has suggested reducing the 2744 m (9000 ft) runway by approximately half, locating industry there and creating jobs. Local politicians, however, want a trotting track and a BMW all-terrain driving range. In negotiations with the airport operating company, BMW has flatly refused joint use, and the car company has put pressure on the Munich Chamber of Commerce to withdraw its support for GA. European IAOPA chief Martin Robinson and IAOPA world president Craig Fuller have written to BMW CEO Dr Norbert Reithofer urging peaceful coexistence. AOPA Germany has filed a legal objection to the authorities' cancellation of the operating permit for the site as an airport - after they withdrew security, an arson attack was mounted on eight aircraft at Fürsti, burning one of them out.

Ironically, BMW has a strong aviation heritage and keeps a fleet of Gulfstream and Falcon business jets at Munich International Airport. If Fürsti were to close, the nearest full GA facilities would be at least 90 minutes away by car at Augsburg and Ingolstadt - the latter being, coincidentally, the home of BMW's arch-rivals Audi. They make very good cars, Audi.

Anyone wishing to give BMW food for thought may direct his email to kundenbetreuung@bmw.de. Please cc info@aopa.de

IAOPA World Assembly - book now to avoid disappointment

If you're planning to attend the IAOPA World Assembly in Tel Aviv in June, please note that the discount for early registration expires on March 5th, so quick action is advisable. AOPA Israel's Yigal Merav says delegates have already registered from the USA, Canada and China as well as European countries. Those planning to fly themselves to Tel Aviv include a group of ten pilots from AOPA Italy, and eight aircraft from AOPA UK have booked slots. Other pilots will be flying in from Greece, Turkey, Crete and Cyprus. For the first time, it's possible to do everything online - register, book accommodation and plan your itinerary. The website is www.iaopa2010.com. There you'll find details of the work programme, together with information about the accompanying persons programme and the opportunities for guided visits to old Jerusalem, Masada and the Dead Sea during and after the Assembly.

Jens Abildgaard's world travels continue

Yigal also reports that AOPA Denmark member Jens Abildgaard arrived in Israel late in February on a flight from Copenhagen to South Africa and back in his C182T, and was met by welcoming members of AOPA Israel. Jens, and FAA CPL/IR, Jens gave a presentation to local AOPA pilots about his four month flight around the globe. Jens also landed on the lowest strip on the globe at Messada (LLMZ) - 1,233 ft below sea level - and had a swim in the Dead Sea before flying for a day in Eilat (LLET) for a swim in the Red Sea. You can follow Jens's progress and read of his past exploits on his excellent website www.hosbiz.com

German seat belt AD rescinded

EASA has rescinded a Proposed Airworthiness Directive (PAD) which would have required the replacement of tens of thousands of sets of safety belts in German-registered aircraft, even though there was no suggestion of a safety issue with them. At a meeting arranged by AOPA Germany President Professor Elmar Giemulla, EASA Certification Director Dr. Norbert Lohl told the affected maintenance organisations that the PAD would be withdrawn and official paperwork issued to cover the affected seatbelts.

In the February enews we told you how EASA had issued the PAD after discovering that there were administrative anomalies in seat-belt certification because of disagreements on formalities between EASA, national authorities and some German maintenance organisations. Even though there were no safety problems, the PAD would have cost vast amounts of money and grounded hundreds of aircraft, because enough replacement seat belts were not available. AOPA Germany estimated some 30,000 sets of belts would have to be replaced.

But at the meeting in February Dr Lohl agreed that the affected German maintenance organisations will be re-certified, no seat belt would have to be replaced and no aircraft grounded. Dr Michael Erb, Managing Director of AOPA Germany, said: "Our thanks to Dr Lohl for finding a quick and sensible solution to this problem."

Icarus 2010 - June 18th to 20th



AOPA Hellas and the Icarus 2010 Organising Committee cordially invite you to participate in Icarus 2010, the second International Aero Expo to be hosted at Tatoi Airfield outside Athens from 18th to 20th June. Icarus Aero Expo Athens 2010 is the only international business and general aviation exhibition in southern Europe, which is one of the fastest-growing aviation markets because of its excellent weather conditions and infrastructure availability. Yiouli Kalafati, President of AOPA Hellas, says: “The world of aviation now has an opportunity to introduce itself and explore the untapped potential of the region while paying a visit to Athens, at the crossroads between East and West, a bridge to the Middle East.”

In June 2008 AOPA Hellas organised the first International Aero Expo Athens which proved to be a huge success with more than 40,000 visitors, 60 exhibitors representing 108 companies, 20 seminar speakers, 105 aircraft, and an air show with the participation of civilian and military aircraft. This flying start gave AOPA Expo Icarus 2008 one of the premier positions among European Aero Expos.

The second Icarus Expo Athens will again be hosted at Tatoi Airfield (LGTT), and will feature an air show with civil and military planes, trial flights for the public, seminars with keynote speakers, and free access to the Hellenic Air Force Museum and to a unique private war bird collection at Tatoi.

Yiouli says: “The events of the 2nd International Aero Expo Athens are being organised under the auspices of IAOPA Europe. Given the recognition of IAOPA among the international general aviation community, the organisational support of the Hellenic Air Force and the support of the Greek Government, Aero Expo Icarus 2010 is bound to be a resounding success with even more resounding benefits for the region’s aviation key players. So come along, and we’ll give you a true Greek welcome!”

Channel Islands tax changes

AOPA’s Channel Islands Chairman Charles Strasser reports that despite lengthy negotiations right up to ministerial level, the exemption from Jersey’s Goods and Sales Tax (GST) for aviation fuel has been cancelled in the latest States of Jersey budget. This means that when administrative arrangements have been completed GST, currently 3%, will be added to all aviation fuel uplifted in Jersey for aircraft up to three tonnes. GST does not apply in the separate jurisdictions of Guernsey and Alderney.

Aviation fuel still remains duty free in the Channel Islands, and prices are attractive compared to the rest of Europe. Furthermore, there is a 5% discount on fuel for AOPA members. This applies to both local and visiting pilots, who can claim the discount on production of their current paid-up membership card. This does not apply in Alderney.

Guernsey International Air Rally

Why not plan to take advantage of the islands' fuel prices, and their friendliness to general aviation, to visit Guernsey Aero Club 39th International Air Rally at EGJB on the 10th, 11th and 12th September? There's a welcome dinner on Friday 10th, a navigation competition and other events on the 11th with a social dinner in the evening, and you can depart at leisure on the Sunday. This is part of Guernsey Aviation Week which will include skydiving, aerobatic displays and other events. See www.guernseyaeroclub.com

New Netherlands chart shows major changes

AOPA Netherlands warns pilots to be sure to operate with the new Netherlands VFR map (paper and GPS) which will be available from March 11th 2010, because major changes have been made.

The new chart has been edited by the German DFS, which AOPA Netherlands Secretary Ary Stigter says is a good example of co-operation and efficiency. The map includes part of Germany, with valid data.

Due to Eurocontrol's Functional Airspace Block Central Europe (FABEC) project AMRUFRA (AMsterdam RUhr, FRAnkfurt) the Nieuw Millingen TMA and CTA have been changed drastically. Ary says: "Fortunately we are glad to announce that VFR access in general has been increased. In addition to that, the map is less complex for VFR traffic, which is also good news. But please note that due to these major changes it is necessary to buy the new map before entering this airspace."

The new charts will this week be placed on the AOPA Netherlands website - see http://www.aopa.nl/index.php?pagina_id=153&ph=1

Amsterdam SRZ change from June

The Special Rules Zone under the Amsterdam TMA expires on June 3rd 2010. Until that date the maximum VFR altitude is 1200 feet and transponders have to be switched to standby - details in the relevant Notam. On June 3rd the ATC radar filter becomes operational, and after that a working Mode S transponder will be required above 1,200 feet and the maximum altitude will be 1,500 feet. Ary Stigter says: "Be aware that there will be a special monitoring on airspace infringements in this area. The 2009 map indicates an enlargement of the Amsterdam CTR, so a valid map is also obligatory - this applies to GPS updates too."

AOPA Ireland moves on NPPL equivalent

EASA's Light Aircraft Pilots Licence is largely based on the UK's National Private Pilots Licence, which was proposed by AOPA UK and provided with a syllabus by the AOPA Instructors Committee. As the name suggests the NPPL is a UK-only licence; it has only recently been accepted by the Channel Islands, and while it is legal to use in Northern Ireland, it cannot be used in the Irish Republic - indeed, NPPL holders using Enniskillen airfield, which lies on the border, have to do a tight turn on climb-out to avoid entering Irish Republic airspace.

Jim Breslin of AOPA Ireland says NPPL holders can fly in the Republic if they conform to a number of additional requirements. Jim says: "Our PPL(A)(H)(G) & (M) students have to pass a mandatory JAR Class 2 Medical and a must have a mandatory JAR RT Licence to qualify - yes, microlights too! A mandatory licensed aerodrome is still required for all aviation training. We feel this is way above the requirements of other EU states and so, are opposing it. JAR-

FCL requirements should not enter into a licence application if the licence is not recognized by the JAR!
“Even pilots visiting Ireland are being placed in an unfair and unacceptable position. A visiting UK NPPL holder is required to:

1. Hold a Class 2 JAR-FCL medical
2. Hold a JAR RT licence
3. Have a minimum of 50 hrs PIC
4. Sign an Irish Air Law ‘Attestation’
5. Produce insurance to fly a G-reg aircraft
6. Pay €80 for ‘validation’ of licence
7. Apply in advance to the Irish Aviation Authority for validation.”

AOPA Ireland is currently objecting to requirements 1 and 2 and is seeking meetings with the IAA and the Minister for Transport in an effort to resolve their differences.

EASA looks to regulate microlights

Despite earlier statements to the contrary EASA has decided to take microlights and light sport aircraft under its wing, and a company has been formed in Britain to advise the Agency on regulation of the sector. AOPA had hoped that regulation at this level would be left entirely to the industry in order to minimise cost and disruption, but sources at EASA say they are concerned lest an accident occur involving commercial air transport and a microlight.